4:Nebesky-Wojkowitz E-5 (1950-1951)1952
AK5 Lepcha AK5

and then somebody of those present leaves the room immediately to search at the spot now indicated; he mostly returns within a short time with the missing objects.

While the family property is being inherited according to the old Lepcha law, the personal belongings of the dead are distributed among his closer relatives. This is usually carried out by the *Mŭn*, while still possessed by the *Mŭk nyam*. But not always is this way of dividing the heritage regarded as just, and it frequently leads to quarrels.

At the end of this ceremony, a food offering is made to the dead. A cup with some water is handed to the *Mŭn*,—who still remains in the trance —and she sprinkles some of the water on all the food which had been placed in front of her, thus making it "eatable for the deceased". Then all the members of the family step forward one by one and present a dish with food to the spirit and burn also some incense, together with traces of food, and a container filled with Lepcha beer is given to the *Mŭn* to drink. Shortly after this offering the *Mŭk nyam* leaves the body of the *Mŭn*, who soon returns to full consciousness, and then removes the rope from her left hand. Some of the Lepchas claim, that when the *Mŭn* begins to complain of pain—usually in a part of her body, corresponding to those limbs and organs of the deceased, which had been affected by the deadly illness or accident —it has to be regarded as a reliable sign, that the *Mŭk nyam* is about to leave the medium.

After a short interval, the *Mŭn* ties again the rope to her left hand and goes into a light trance, in order to guide the spirit of the dead to the other world. On the way to the *Rŭm lyang*, an obstacle called *Lep*, which is imagined to be like a tremendous waterfall or a deep precipice, has to be crossed by the *Mŭk nyam* with the assistance of the *Mŭn*. Having overcome this barrier, the spirit is met by *The kung tek*,[16] the first *Bong thing*, and his wife *Ne kung ngal*, the first *Mŭn*. They will enumerate to the deceased the line of his ancestors, mentioning on the seventh place the name of the mountain, with which his clan believes itself to be connected,[17] and then they accompany the spirit, to meet *Fă grŏng thing* and *Nă zŏng nyo*, the ancestors of the Lepchas. In the *Rŭm lyang* the spirits of all, who had died in more recent times, dwell in the form of shadows, while those who died soon after the world had been created, reside here in their bodily form, ready to return to the world should its inhabitants die out.

There are different accounts to be found among the various clans of the Lepchas regarding the way in which the *Mŭk nyam* is supposed to reach the *Rŭm lyang*. The Chronicles of the Maharajas of Sikkim mention a belief of the Sengdenmos, that the spirit goes to